THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) No, Sir. No concrete proposal in this regard is under consideration of the Government. However, alternative methods of providing income support to the farmers are being examined to ensure that the farmers get the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for their crops.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise in view of reply to (a) above.

Storage and Movement of Essential Commodities

813. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:

SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to lift control on storage and movement of essential commodities like wheat, paddy etc; and

(b) if so, the details of the new policy in this regard and what would be its impact on availability and retail prices of these commodities throughtout the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Central Government has issued an Order under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 allowing dealers to freely buy, stock, sell, transport, distribute etc., any quantity in respect of wheat, paddy/rice, coarse grains, sugar, edible oilseeds and edible oils without requiring a permit or license therefor under any order issued under the Act. The Order will take effect after thirty days form the date of its issue(15.2.2002) notwithstanding anything to the contrary in any Order made by a State Government before the commencement of the Order. It is expected that this would enable farmers to get best prices for their produce, achieve price stability and ensure better availability of foodgrains in deficit areas.

Restoration of Rationing System in Kerala

814. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government consider to restore the Uuniversal Rationing System in Kerala;

(b) whether any requistion has been received from the State Government to supply wheat for distribution to the families Below the Poverty Line; and

(c) whether Government consider to allot wheat to the State for the above purpose on request?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOODAND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRIASHOK PRADHAN): (a) No. Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) No, Sir. the BPL allocation to States is based on approved poverty estimates of the Planning Commission worked out on the basis of an entitlement of 25 kg per family per month. The request of the State Government is for an additional wheat allocation without any reducation in the allocation of rice. This would be beyond the entitlement of the State. Increase in the allocation of foodgrains for BPL families in respect of a particular State cannot be considered in isolation.

Complete Decontrol of Sugar

815. SHRI NAGENDRA NATH OJHA:

SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

SHRI RAJNATH SINGH "SURYA":

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has been decided to resort to complete decontrol of sugar Industry;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any time frame has been fixed for this prupose;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the steps already taken, if any, in this direction; and

(f) details of the new policy in this regard?